(d) Confidentiality of information governing the banker customer relationship is a widely accepted international practice.

Phasing out of subsidy on Foodgrains

1498. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to phase out subsidy on foodgrains during the current year;

(b) if so, the details of the plan to phase out subsidy alongwith its implications; and

(c) the details of the policy changes effected during the last one year to do away with heavy mounting burden of subsidy?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) There is no such proposal under the consideration of the Government.

(b) In view of (a) above, (b) does not arise.

(c) In order to reduce the widening gap between the procurement and distribution cost and the PDS issue price, and the consequent increase in food subsidy to Rs. 8700 crores in 1998-99 (RE), the Government raised the issue price for APL families under TPDS from 29 January 1999. The budgeted food subsidy for 1999-2000 is now Rs. 8200 crores.

Accounts of PSUs of Bihar

1499. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA:
SHRI RAGHAVJI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that CAG in its report pulled up Bihar Government for not keeping accounts of 49 State PSUs as reported in the Indian Express of November 21, 1998 under the caption, "Death stalking unpaid Bihar PSU worker"; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Prime Minister's Discussion with Prof. Amartya Sen

1500. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA:
SHRI RAGHAVJI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister had met Noble Laureate Prof. Amartya Sen; if so, the details of the discussions held with him; and

(b) what are the concrete steps Government propose to take in the wake of these discussions?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) and (b) The Prime Minister had met Noble Laureate Prof. Amartya Sen. Prime Minister congratulated him. No formal talks were held with Prof. Amartya Sen.

पंजाब में चावल मिलों के सामने संकट पैदा होना

1501. **श्री बलवंत सिंह रामूवालिया:**
श्री राज मोहिन्दर सिंह:

क्या **खाद्य प्रसंस्करण उद्योग** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि पंजाब की चावल मिलों के सामने कुछ संकट उत्पन्न हो जाने के कारण उन्हें उत्पादन बंद करने के लिए विवश होना पड़ रहा है;

(ख) यदि नहीं, तो क्या सरकार ने औद्योगिक समस्याओं को दूर करने के लिए हाल ही में कोई कदम उठाए हैं; और

(ग) यदि हां, तो क्या कदम उठाए गए हैं और चावल मिल एसोसिएशन के अनुसार मिलों के सामने पेश आ रही समस्याओं का ब्यौरा क्या है?

खाद्य प्रसंस्करण उद्योग मंत्री (श्री प्रमोद महाजन): (क) से (ग) जी नहीं। लेकिन पंजाब सरकार से एक अनुरोध प्राप्त हुआ है कि 15.9.98 से 27.10.98 के दौरान खरीदे गए धान के लिए चावल की